

Elm Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Elm Parish Council held at the Portacabin, Begdale, Elm on Wednesday 10th May 2023 commencing at 7.15pm

[Meetings of the Parish Council may be recorded by the Clerk to aid with minute taking. Any such recording is destroyed once the minutes are agreed].

Present: Cllrs – Cage, Ferguson (Chair), Hopkin & Milham. Co-opted during the meeting – Cllrs Butcher, Goodley, Probets, Stevenson & Welbourne.

District Cllrs Roy & Summers, Mrs S England – Parish Clerk. 10 Members of the public.

The meeting commenced at 7.15pm, following on from the Annual Parish Assembly.

- 01.23 **To appoint a Chairman** – It was resolved to appoint Cllr Wendy Ferguson as Chair of Elm Parish Council. Proposed Cllr Hopkin, seconded Cllr Cage.
- 02.23 **Chair to sign Declaration of Acceptance** – Cllr Ferguson signed the Declaration.
- 03.23 **To appoint a Vice-Chairman** – It was resolved to appoint Cllr Welbourne as Vice-Chairman. Proposed Cllr Hopkin, seconded Cllr Milham.
- 04.23 **Apologies** – None reported.
- 05.23 **To resolve on co-option of Councillors** – It was resolved to co-opt the following candidates onto the Parish Council – Mr Tim Butcher, Mr Michael Goodley, Mr Paul Probets, Mr Nigel Stevenson, Mr Richard Welbourne. The Clerk confirmed that all members would sign a Declaration of Acceptance at the end of the meeting.
- 06.23 **Disclosable interests and requests for dispensation** – Cllr Goodley advised his interest in agenda item 20 concerning the Canal Towpath (due to his connection to an individual involved). See minute ref. 20.23.
- 07.23 **Open Forum** – The Clerk was requested to amend a reference to the time of meetings in Standing Orders; it was confirmed that this would be done.
- 08.23 **Review and approval of Minutes** – Council resolved to approve the minutes of meeting held on 12th April 2023 as a true record of proceedings.
- 09.23 **AGM Tasks** –
- (i) To review Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. *Council resolved to approve the content of the documents.*
 - (ii) To review effectiveness of Council's internal control systems. *Council resolved to approve current procedures.*
 - (iii) To resolve continued appointment of Mr Terry Jordan as Council's Internal Auditor for 2023-24. *Council resolved to approve the appointment.*
 - (iv) To review all policies and procedures. *Council resolved to approve the content of the documents.*
 - (v) To review Council's Asset Register and insurance arrangements for the coming year. *Council resolved to approve the details of the updated Asset Register and insurance arrangements.*
 - (vi) To confirm meeting dates for the municipal year (second Wednesday monthly with exception of August when no meeting held). *Council resolved to approve the dates as stated.*
- 10.23 **Police matters** –
- The Chair advised there had been no further communications from the Police & Crime Commissioner and confirmed that she would ask for an update. The police had attended an incident in Wales Bank where the occupiers of a vehicle were allegedly inhaling nitrous oxide, the gas had been confiscated and those involved had been permitted to drive away from the scene. Perpetrators of anti-social behaviour at Begdale had been visited by the police and reprimanded. The mobile speed unit had recorded several motorists driving at excess speed along Main/Friday Bridge Road in Elm, the offenders had been dealt with appropriately. It was queried if monthly police/council meetings were still taking place; Clerk to chase.

11.23 **District Councillors' Reports –**

The Chair welcomed District Councillors Daljit Roy and Matthew Summers and congratulated them on their appointment. It was confirmed that the first full District Council meeting would be held on 22nd May. Cllr Summers expressed thanks to members for the time they committed in their role as Parish Councillors. Cllr Roy advised he had been visiting residents in the area and hoped to get more people involved in the Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

12.23 **Clerk's Report –** The Clerk reported as follows;

There had been a good response to the 20mph zone survey with 120 submissions received to date.

Further clearance of obsolete documents had been undertaken at the Cemetery Chapel, once completed arrangements would be made for Data Shredders to undertake confidential disposal.

The Clerk reminded members of the need to undertake data protection measures in relation to personal information which may be stored on their electronic devices. It was confirmed that PC email addresses were available for those who wished to use them and this was the Internal Auditor's recommended practice.

The new area of Grove Gardens (adjacent to the pond) had been confirmed as a suitable location for a new litter bin. The District Council had advised an installation cost of £308.74. Subject deferred pending consideration for inclusion in the 2024/25 budget. It was confirmed that Cllr Cage had attended new councillor training, new members would be invited to undertake training should they wish to do so. Clarion Housing had been contacted concerning overgrown trees on the open green space adjacent to Birch Grove/Main Road in Elm; awaiting response. Work was being undertaken on both the Internal and External Audits; the AGAR report would be completed for signing off on the June agenda. Members were asked to think about potential projects for the 2024/25 Local Highways Improvement application (LHI), an extraordinary meeting would need to be held in July to consider options. Tree works highlighted as a result of the full parish survey had now been completed. The streetlight upgrade project was underway but the time frame for completion would need to be extended due to delays in both the supply of materials and the work carried out by UKPN.

13.23 **Financial Matters**

i. The Clerk advised the following sums had been received since the last meeting;

Cemetery Cottage rent £750.00; Cemetery fees £787.50; Interest £229.56.

ii. Council resolved to approve expenditure for May as detailed below;

PAYEE	DETAIL	NET	VAT	TOTAL
Idverde	Grounds maint. April	£1,359.94	£271.99	£1,631.93
ROSPA	Play area inspections	£349.00	£69.80	£418.80
Cambs County Council	FB playing field - Annual rent	£375.00		£375.00
Latta Hire Ltd	Disabled toilet hire	£217.60	£43.52	£261.12
Wave	Water rates, Begdale	£15.79		£15.79
CAPALC	Cllr Training course	£75.00		£75.00
L Welbourne	Cemetery records admin.	£201.50		£201.50
Tamar IT	Assistance with survey	£50.00	£10.00	£60.00
Plusnet	Broadband	£22.96	£4.59	£27.55
S England	Clerk's salary	£1,153.34		£1,153.34
S England	Clerk's expenses	£274.64	£2.60	£277.24
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£130.36		£130.36
Nest	Pension	£87.06		£87.06
		£4,312.19	£402.50	£4,714.69

Chairperson

iii. To resolve to approve income & expenditure for year end 31.3.23. Item deferred pending completion of audit.

- iv. To resolve to approve Annual Governance Audit Return for year end 31.3.23. Item deferred pending completion of audit tasks.
- v. To resolve to accept quotation for annual insurance policy commencing 1st June 2023. The Clerk advised that a renewal premium quotation of £4699.92 had been received from Gallagher & Co. which was higher than expected (budget sum allocated £4600.00) and confirmed she was seeking clarification of the figure. It was suspected that the increase was mainly due to an increase in the index linking percentage rate. Taking into account that the Council was on a long term agreement with Gallagher it was resolved to accept the quotation of £4699.92.
- vi. To review signing mandates for Council's bank accounts. It was resolved to appoint Cllrs Ferguson, Proberts and Welbourne as Council signatories; Clerk to continue as non-authorized signatory (i.e. limited powers to deal with correspondence, account management and inter-account transfers for example).
- vii. To resolve on quotation received for new lanterns to be fitted on streetlights reference FPC2A & FPC3, Fridaybridge Road. It was resolved to accept the quotation of £496.40 + VAT submitted by FDC for repair of the assets.

14.23 Correspondence

For comment and/or resolution;

- i. Email, parishioner – request for advice on potential location of a 'hobby space' for people to use in Elm. It was suggested that, (i) those seeking the space may wish to set up a charity in order to access funding for the venture and, (ii) it may be worth contacting Elm Self Store to enquire if any containers were available. Clerk to advise accordingly.
- ii. Addendum, letter, parishioner – concerns raised relating to motor vehicle usage along Wales Bank including; HGV's and agricultural machinery using the route; deterioration of the road surface; vehicles travelling at excess speed creating hazard for pedestrians; vehicles using the route as a diversion. Councillors confirmed that they shared the parishioner's concerns; Clerk to forward the details to Cambridgeshire Highways.
- iii. Addendum, letter, former Cllr Marjorie Cotterell – conveying thanks to Councillors and Clerks; past and present; for their support, friendship, and goodwill and also for the floral tribute presented to her at the May meeting.
- iv. Addendum, email – raising concerns relating to ornamental decoration placed on a grave at Elm Cemetery. The Clerk confirmed that the matter was in hand and a meeting had been arranged with relevant parties.

For information purposes (see website or contact Clerk for further details);

- i. Cambs CC – Roadworks Bulletin
- ii. FDC – Details of fitness initiative for older residents.
- iii. Cambs Matters Newsletter.
- iv. FDC – Launch of free/low cost fitness sessions in Fenland.

15.23 Planning

- 1. **F/YR23/0288/F** – 2 x single storey rear extensions to existing building at, The Elm Tree Inn, Low Rd, Elm. Council resolved to support the application.
- 2. **F/YR23/0320/F** – single storey rear extension involving demolition of conservatory at, Coral Lodge, Well End, Friday Bridge, PE14 0HG. Council resolved to support the application.
- 3. **F/YR23/0329/F** – Installation of 968kw ground mounted solar farm including ancillary plant and 8 x 6m pole mounted CCTV cameras at, land east of 178 Gosmoor Lane. Council resolved to support the application on condition that measures were implemented to prevent damage to the road surface by construction traffic. Clerk requested to highlight that the surface of Gosmoor Lane was merely tarmac laid over mud i.e. not supported by strong foundations.

16.23 Highways & Footways

Update on outstanding matters;

- i. LHI application 2022-23 – It was confirmed that the application was still being assessed by the Road Safety Audit Team.

New matters;

- i. TTRO – Road closure, Fridaybridge Road, Elm, 9th-19th May 2023. It was reported that numerous complaints had been received concerning the road closure in particular the inconvenience caused to residents due to the

bus route diversion. The Clerk confirmed she had been in touch with both Cambs Highways and Stagecoach stressing the difficulties arising as a result of the TTRO. Highways had responded advising that the works would likely be completed within 4-5 days at which point the bus service would resume. Situation to be monitored.

- 17.23 **To receive requests from Members for subjects to be included on the next agenda.**
Cllr Hopkin – To assess damage/loss of trees planted as part of Council’s Tree Planting Project; consider replacement.
Cllr Hopkin – Investigate whether housing development adjacent to Meadowgate Field agricultural allotment would cause area to be land locked.
- 18.23 **Date of next meeting** – It was resolved to confirm that the next Parish Council meeting would take place on Wednesday 14th June commencing at 6.30pm.
- 19.23 **To resolve to enter closed session in order to consider the following agenda item on the grounds of confidentiality by virtue of; The Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960 s1(2).**
8pm - It was resolved to enter closed session.
- 20.23 **To receive update on matters connected to alleged breach of planning on Council owned land, resolve appropriately** (confidential due to personal data protection and possible legal implications).
8.10pm Cllr Goodley confirmed his interest (due to his connection to an individual involved in the matter).
No discussion or action resolved; subject to be carried forward pending receipt of further information.
- 266.22 **Close of meeting** – The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed
Elm Parish Council Chairman

Date